

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR VE NS
SUBJ: STATE VISIT OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT PEREZ TO SURINAM

REF: PARAMARIBO A-37

1. SUMMARY: THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL STATE VISIT OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT PEREZ TO SURINAM HAS EXPANDED VENEZUELAN INFLUENCE HERE AND HAS SERVED SURINAM'S FOREIGN POLICY GOALS. THE DYNAMIC PEREZ CREATED A HIGHLY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION. AGREEMENTS WERE RECAHED WHICH SHOULD LEAD TO EXPORTS OF BAUXITE AND PREFABRICATED HOUSES FROM SURINAM TO VENEZUELA. COMMON VIEWS ON MOST INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES WERE IN EVIDENCE, AND CULTURAL RELATIONS WILL BE STRENGTHENED. THE MOST NOTABLE STATEMENT BY PEREZ ON A THIRD COUNTRY WAS HIS CONDEMNATION OF CUBAN INTERVENTION IN AFRICA. END SUMMARY.

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2. OVERVIEW. VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ PAID A STATE VISIT TO SURINAM JULY 24-26. ALL INDICATIONS ARE THAT BOTH THE VENEZUELAN AND SURINAMESE REGARD IT AS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL. FOR VENEZUELA IT WAS ANOTHER STEP FORWARD IN ITS EFFORTS TO EXPAND ITS INFLUENCE WITH THE SMALLER COUNTRIES OF THE CARIBBEAN AND NORTHERN SOUTH AMERICA. SURINAM FOR ITS PART WAS PLEASED TO RECEIVE SO

MUCH ATTENTION FROM ONE OF THE MAJOR SOUTH AMERICAN POWERS ON THIS, THE FIRST STATE VISIT IT HAS HOSTED SINCE ITS INDEPENDENCE IN 1975 (ASIDE FROM THE VISIT OF QUEEN JULIANA).

3. A WHIRLWIND OF ACTIVITY. THE DYNAMIC PEREZ CONVEYED AN IMPRESSION OF ENERGY AND PURPOSE, AS WELL AS PERSONAL WARMTH, IN HIS WHIRLWIND SCHEDULE. ASIDE FROM THE NORMAL WREATH-LAYINGS, RECEPTIONS, AND OTHER FORMAL CEREMONIES, HE WALKED THE STREETS, KISSED BABIES, DID AN IMPROMPTU INDIAN DANCE, TOURED A FACTORY, AND SHOOK HANDS WITH VISITORS IN A DOWNTOWN RESTAURANT. HE HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE, A WORKING LUNCH, SPOKE TO PARLIAMENT, SIGNED A JOINT COMMUNIQUE, AND SIGNED A TREATY ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION. HE BROUGHT ALONG A LARGE CONTINGENT OF CABINET MEMBERS, BUSINESSMEN, MEDIA EXECUTIVES, AND REPORTERS. THIS TYPE OF HIGH-POWERED VISIT. ACCENTUATED BY PEREZ'S PERSONAL STYLE, IS NEW TO

SURINAM; LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS, THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DEEPLY AND FAVORABLY IMPRESSED.

4. ECONOMIC ASPECTS. PEREZ STRESSED THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES, AS FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE THIRD WORLD, NEED TO DEVELOP CLOSER ECONOMIC RELATIONS. HE STRESSED SUCH FAMILIAR THEMES AS THE NEED FOR A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER AND THE NEED FOR LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION. HE EMPHASIED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AMAZON PACT FOR BOTH COUNTRIES. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TREATY ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION (TEXT WILL BE FORWARDED BY AIRGRAM) IS A GENERAL UMBRELLA AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH THE TWO COUNTRIES HOPE TO DEVELOP TRADE AND TECHNICAL INTERCHANGES.. ON A MORE CONCRETE LEVEL, IT APPEARS THAT SURINAM WILL BENEFIT OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS FROM AN AGREEMENT SIGNED DURING THE VISIT WHEREBY VENEZUELA WILL PURCHASE BAUXITE FROM SURINAM (TEXT WILL BE FORWARDED BY AIRGRAM.) PRESIDENT PEREZ ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT WILL PURCHASE PREFABRICATED WOODEN HOUSES FROM THE SURINAMESE FIRM BRUYNZEEL.

5. POLITICAL ASPECTS. PEREZ AND HIS SURINAMESE HOSTS EMPHASIZED THE COMMON COMMITMENTS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES TO DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, ANTI-COLONIALISM, AND ARMS CONTROL. IN PARTICULAR, PEREZ'S OUTSPOKEN ADVOCACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS APPRECIATED IN SURINAM, AS SEEN, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE SPEECH WHICH PARLIAMENTARY CHAIRMAN WIJNTUIN GAVE IN RESPONSE TO PEREZ'S ADDRESS TO THE PARLIAMENT.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS. PEREZ LAID THE FIRST STONE FOR A NEW ANDRES BELLO CULTURAL CENTER IN PARAMARIBO, WHICH WILL REPORTEDLY COST OVER \$500,00. HE ANNOUNCED THAT

A VENEZUELAN CULTURAL GROUP WILL COME HERE FOR THE CELEBRATION MARKING THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF SURINAM'S INDEPENDENCE THIS NOVEMBER 25. HE ALSO SAID THAT VENEZUELA WOULD MAKE POST-GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE TO SURINAMERS FOR STUDIES IN VENEZUELA.

7. THIRD COUNTRY ISSUES--CUBA, GUYANA AND BRAZIL. ASKED AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ABOUT THE CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA, PEREZ STATED THAT VENEZUELA IS "CATEGORICALLY" OPPOSED TO INTERVENTION BY ONE COUNTRY IN THE AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE. HE STATED THAT THIS PRINCIPLE IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR SMALL COUNTRIES UNABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. WITH REGARD TO THE BORDER DISPUTE WITH GUYANA, HE SAID HE WOULD BE VISITING GEORGE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TOWN NEXT MONTH AND HOPED TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THE ISSUE. HE DISMISSED THE PROPOSITION THAT BRAZIL HAS EXPANSIONIST AIMS IN SOUTH AMERICA.

8. COMMENT. THE VISIT, COMING SO SOON AFTER PRIME MINISTER ARRON'S JUNE VISIT TO CARACAS (REPAIR), REINFORCES SURINAM'S WARM RELATIONS WITH VENEZUELA. ALTHOUGH SURINAM IS MORE CAUTIOUS ABOUT ITS ADVOCACY OF THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC POINTS OF VIEW THAN VENEZUELA, IT IS WILLING TO SUBSCRIBE TO THEM IN THE ABSTRACT IN MEETINGS SUCH AS THESE. SURINAM HOPES FOR CONCRETE BENEFITS IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE (EXPORTS OF BAUXITE AND WOODEN PRODUCTS), AND HAS INDICATED ITS READINESS FOR MUCH MORE INTENSIVE CULTURAL RELATIONS. FROM THE STANDPOINT OF U.S. INTERESTS, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THIS OBVIOUS EXTENSION OF VENEZUELAN INFLUENCE SHOULD BE VIEWED IN A POSITIVE LIGHT, SINCE IT APPEARS THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE U.S. AND VENEZUELA, AS WELL AS SURINAM, COINCIDE ON SO MANY POINTS. OSTRANDER

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